

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SEPTEMBER 20, 1945

EXECUTIVE ORDER

TERMINATION OF THE OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES
AND DISPOSITION OF ITS FUNCTIONS

By virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and Statutes, including Title I of the First War Powers Act, 1941, and as President of the United States and Commander in Chief of the Army and the Navy, it is hereby ordered as follows:

1. There are transferred to and consolidated in an Interim Research and Intelligence Service, which is hereby established in the Department of State, (a) the functions of the Research and Analysis Branch and of the Presentation Branch of the Office of Strategic Services (provided for by the Military Order of June 13, 1942), excluding such functions performed within the countries of Germany and Austria, and (b) those other functions of the Office of Strategic Services (hereinafter referred to as the Office) which relate to the functions of the said Branches transferred by this paragraph. The functions of the Director of Strategic Services and of the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff, relating to the functions transferred to the Service by this paragraph, are transferred to the Secretary of State. The personnel, property, and records of the said Branches, except such thereof as is located in Germany and Austria, and so much of the other personnel, property, and records of the Office and of the funds of the Office as the Director of the Bureau of the Budget shall determine to relate primarily to the functions transferred by this paragraph, are transferred to the said Service. Military personnel now on duty in connection with the activities transferred by this paragraph may, subject to applicable law and to the extent mutually agreeable to the Secretary of State and to the Secretary of War or the Secretary of the Navy, as the case may be, continue on such duty in the Department of State.
2. The Interim Research and Intelligence Service shall be abolished as of the close of business December 31, 1945, and the Secretary of State shall provide for winding up its affairs. Pending such abolition, (a) the Secretary of State may transfer from the said Service to such agencies of the Department of State as he shall designate any function of the Service, (b) the Secretary may curtail the activities carried on by the Service, (c) the head of the Service, who shall be designated by the Secretary, shall be responsible to the Secretary or to such other officer of the Department of State as the Secretary shall direct, and (d) the Service shall, except as otherwise provided in this order, be administered as an organizational entity in the Department of State.
3. All functions of the Office not transferred by paragraph 1 of this order, together with all personnel, records, property, and funds of the Office not so transferred, are transferred to the Department of War; and the Office, including the office of the Director of Strategic Services, is terminated. The functions of the Director of Strategic Services and of the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff, relating to the functions transferred by this paragraph, are transferred to the Secretary of War. Naval personnel on duty with the Office in connection with the activities transferred by this paragraph may, subject to applicable law and to the extent mutually agreeable to the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy, continue on such duty in the Department of War. The Secretary of War shall, whenever he deems it compatible with the national interest, discontinue any activity transferred by this paragraph and wind up all affairs relating thereto.

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4. Such further measures and dispositions as may be determined by the Director of the Bureau of the Budget to be necessary to effectuate the transfer or redistribution of functions provided for in this order shall be carried out in such manner as the Director may direct and by such agencies as he may designate.

5. All provisions of prior orders of the President which are in conflict with this order are amended accordingly.

6. This order shall, except as otherwise specifically provided, be effective as of the opening of business October 1, 1945.

HARRY S. TRUMAN

THE WHITE HOUSE

September 20, 1945

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In connection with the executive order relating to termination of the Office of Strategic Services, the President today sent the following letter to Major General William J. Donovan, Director of Strategic Services:

My dear General Donovan:

I appreciate very much the work which you and your staff undertook, beginning prior to the Japanese surrender, to liquidate those wartime activities of the Office of Strategic Services which will not be needed in time of peace.

Timely steps should also be taken to conserve those resources and skills developed within your organization which are vital to our peacetime purposes.

Accordingly, I have today directed, by Executive order, that the activities of the Research and Analysis Branch and the Presentation Branch of the Office of Strategic Services be transferred to the State Department. This transfer, which is effective as of October 1, 1945, represents the beginning of the development of a coordinated system of foreign intelligence within the permanent framework of the Government.

Consistent with the foregoing, the Executive order provides for the transfer of the remaining activities of the Office of Strategic Services to the War Department; for the abolition of the Office of Strategic Services; and for the continued orderly liquidation of some of the activities of the Office without interrupting other services of a military nature the need for which will continue for some time.

I want to take this occasion to thank you for the capable leadership you have brought to a vital wartime activity in your capacity as Director of Strategic Services. You may well find satisfaction in the achievements of the Office and take pride in your own contribution to them. These are in themselves large rewards. Great additional reward for your efforts should lie in the knowledge that the peacetime intelligence services of the Government are being erected on the foundation of the facilities and resources mobilized through the Office of Strategic Services during the war.

Sincerely yours,

HARRY S. TRUMAN

The President today addressed the following letter to the Secretary of State:

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I have today signed an Executive order which provides for the transfer to the State Department of the functions, personnel, and other resources of the Research and Analysis Branch and the Presentation Branch of the Office of Strategic Services. The order also transfers the remaining activities of the Office of Strategic Services to the War Department and abolishes that Office. These changes become effective October 1, 1945.

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The above transfer to the State Department will provide you with resources which we have agreed you will need to aid in the development of our foreign policy, and will assure that pertinent experience accumulated during the war will be preserved and used in meeting the problems of the peace. Those readjustments and reductions which are required in order to gear the transferred activities and resources into State Department operations should be made as soon as practicable.

I particularly desire that you take the lead in developing a comprehensive and coordinated foreign intelligence program for all Federal agencies concerned with that type of activity. This should be done through the creation of an interdepartmental group, heading up under the State Department, which would formulate plans for my approval. This procedure will permit the planning of complete coverage of the foreign intelligence field and the assigning and controlling of operations in such manner that the needs of both the individual agencies and the Government as a whole will be met with maximum effectiveness.

Sincerely yours,

HARRY S. TRUMAN

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